

Gunnison Gorge Unit Grazing Permit Renewal

Scoping Meeting

Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

- BLM directed to manage for healthy public lands
- In response to Colorado Public Land Health Standards
- A 10 year review of land health conditions in a landscape unit
- Gunnison Gorge unit evaluated in 2011/2012
- Initial assessment based on rapid evaluation of many sites
- Now based on long term monitoring studies

Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

- Field work in 2011



Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

- Standard 1 Soils
- Standard 2 Riparian
- Standard 3 Plant and Animal Communities
- Standard 4 Special Status Species Populations and Habitat
- Standard 5 Water Quality

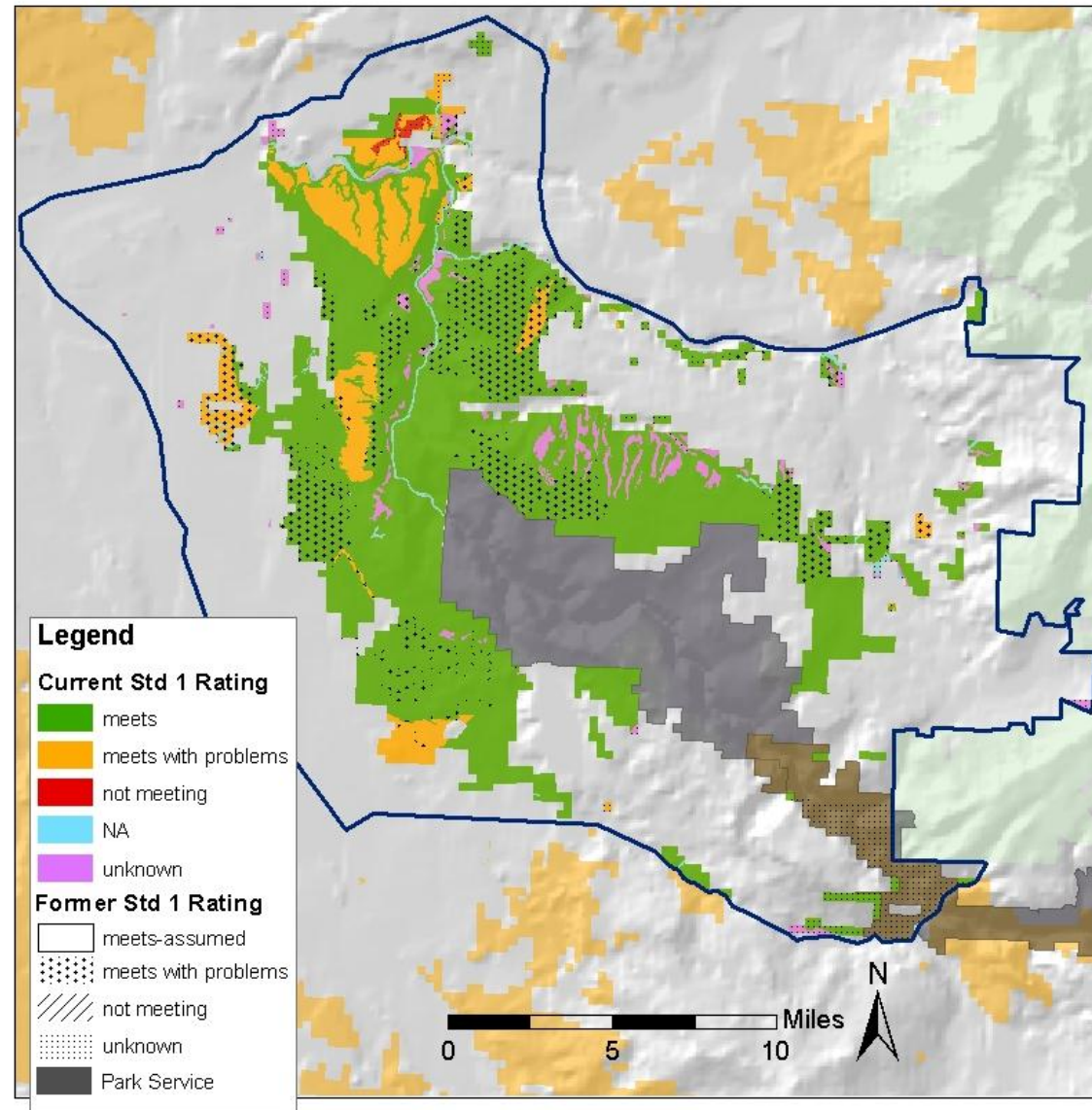
Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

110,606 Acres in Unit

	Lands and Streams Meeting	Lands and Streams Meeting with Problems	Lands and Streams Not Meeting	Not Evaluated or Not Applicable
All Standards	44%	37%	14%	5%
Standard 1	82%	11%	0.4%	7%
Standard 2	38%	34%	0%	28%
Standard 3	53%	29%	11%	7%
Standard 4	50%	33%	12%	5%
Standard 5	64%	0%	3%	33%

Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

2012 Standard 1 Soil Health Determinations



- Grazing Permit Renewal and LHA:

- Standard 1 Soils

Concerns: minor with regard to grazing
limited areas of low BSC, exotic plant
litter, low basal cover

Trends:

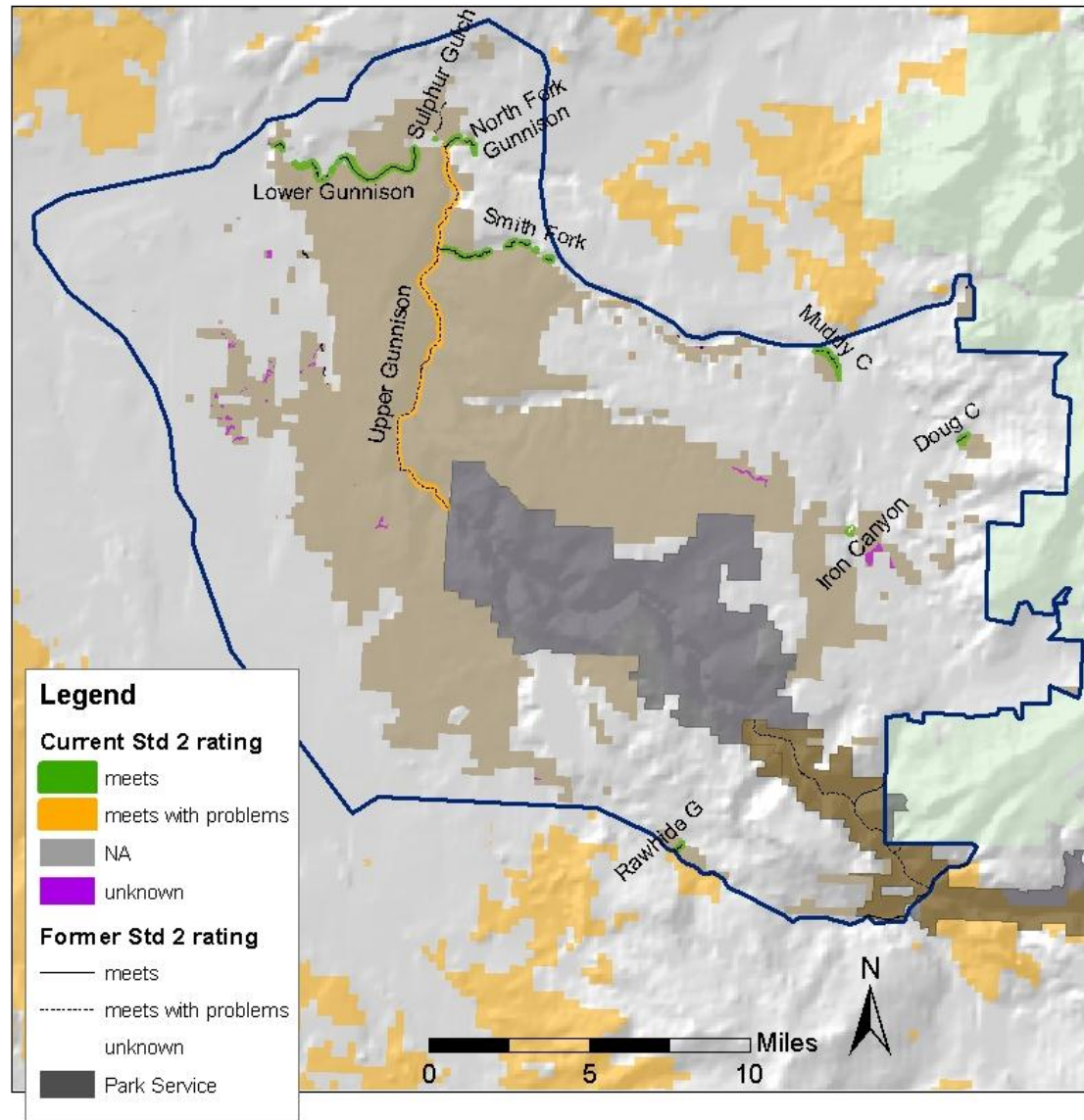
increasing exotic plant litter

Causes:

weeds, domestic sheep management,
drought

Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

2012 Standard 2 Riparian Health Determinations



- Grazing Permit Renewal and LHA:

- Standard 2 Riparian

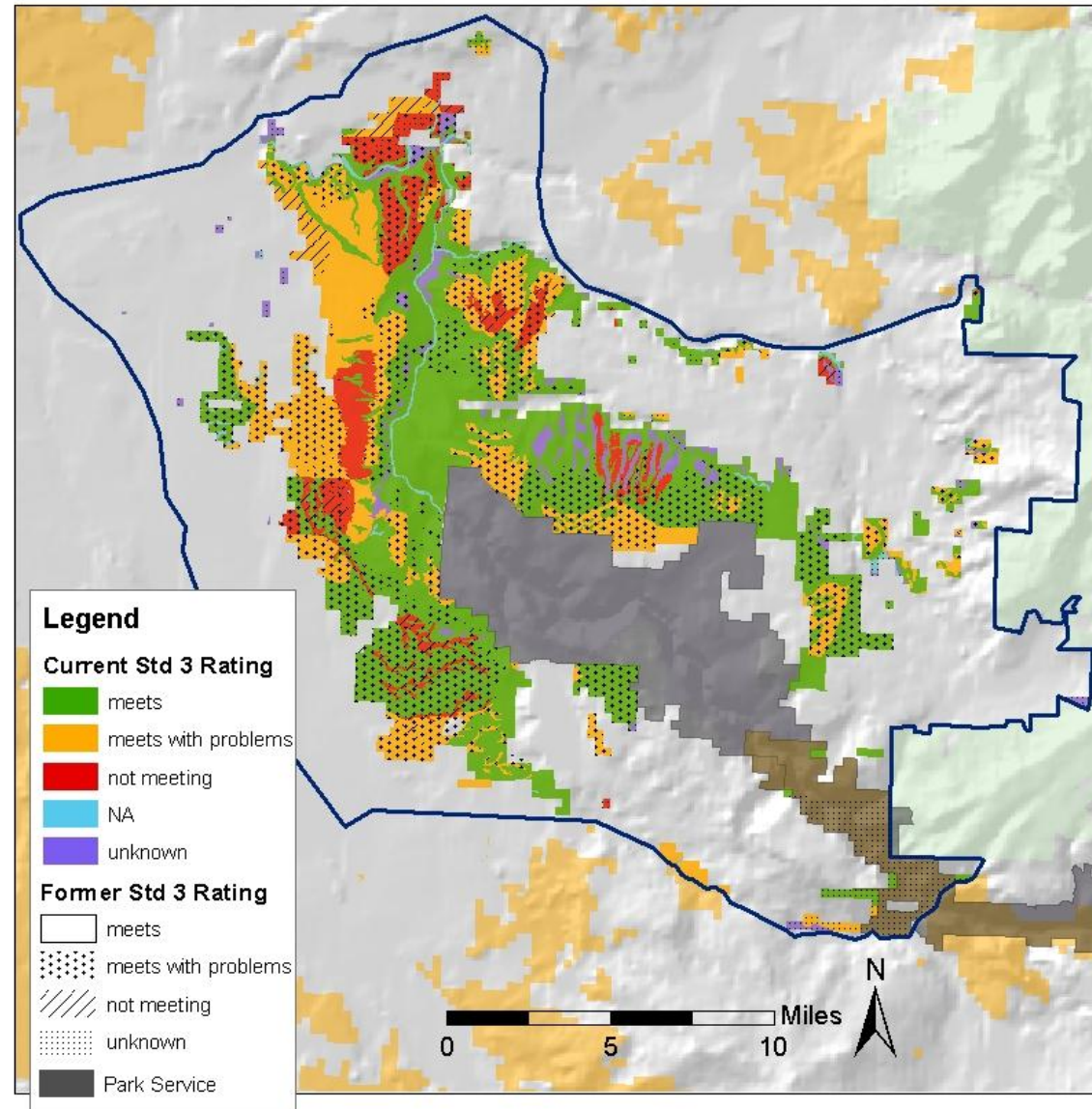
Concerns: minimal with regard to grazing

Trends: few clear trends

Causes: mostly related to dam operations

Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

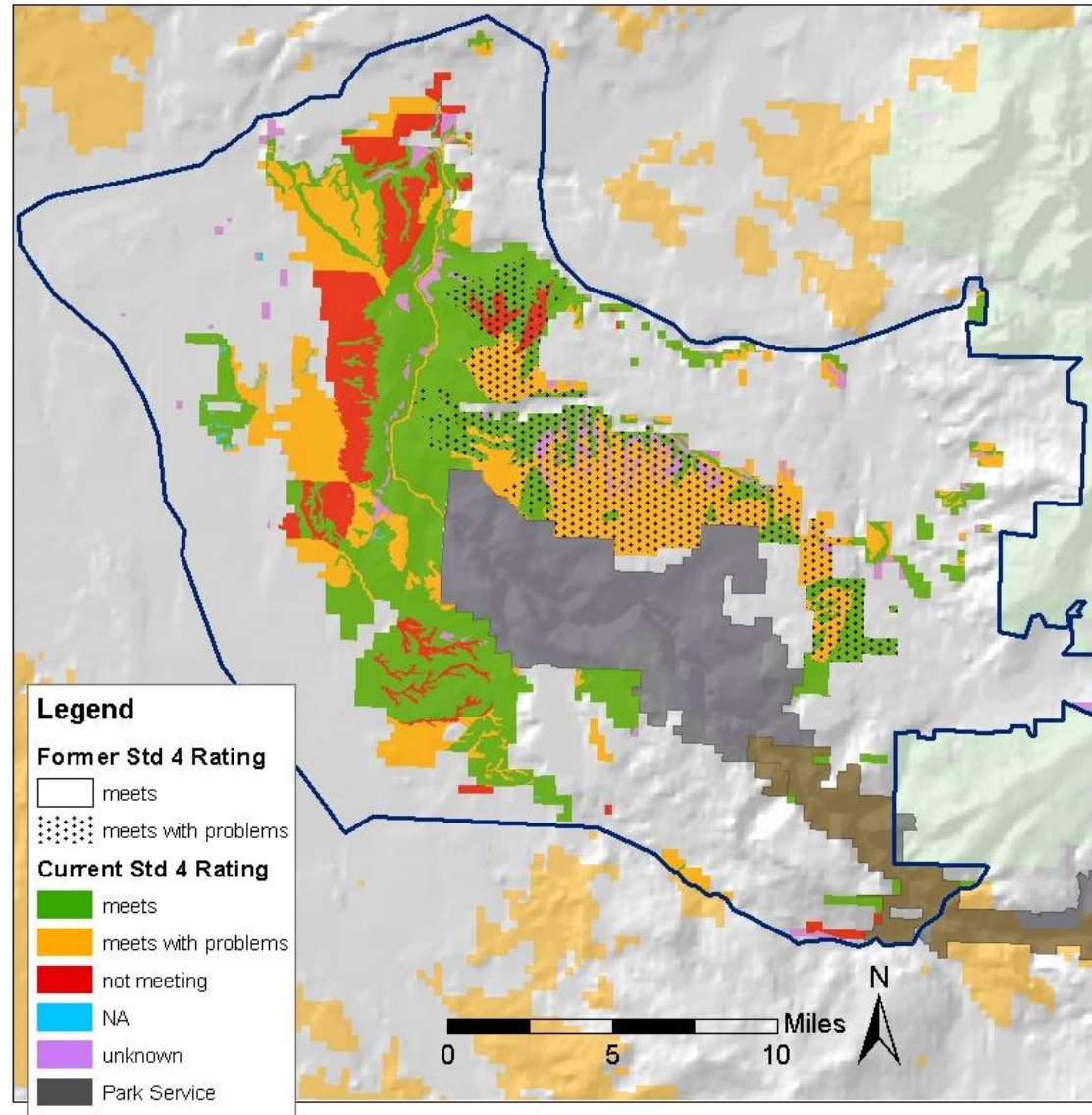
2012 Standard 3 Native Plant and Animal Community Health Determinations



- Grazing Permit Renewal and LHA:
 - Standard 3 Native Plant and Animal Communities
 - Concerns: exotic plants, shrub condition,
perennial forbs
 - Trends: increases in exotic plants and cool
season perennial grass, shrub vigor
improving
 - Causes: weeds, domestic sheep management

Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

2012 Standard 4 Special Status Species Health Determinations



- Grazing Permit Renewal and LHA:

- Standard 4 Special Status Species

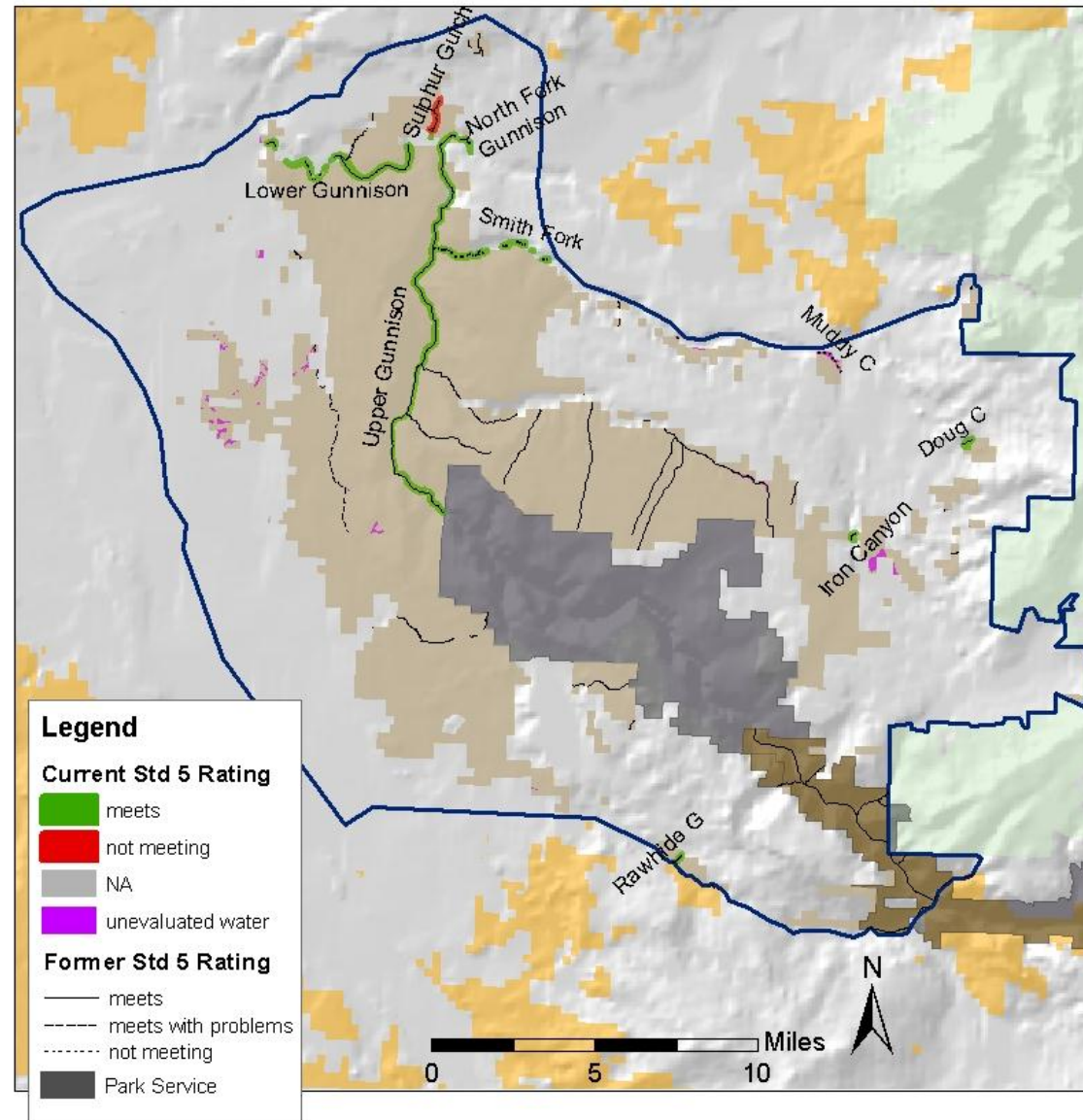
Concerns: Gunnison sage grouse habitat,
Colorado hookless cactus, clay-loving wild
buckwheat habitat

Trends: increases in exotic plants and cool
season perennial grass , shrub vigor
improving

Causes: weeds, domestic sheep management,
historic grazing, recreation impacts

Gunnison Gorge Land Health Assessment

2012 Standard 5 Water Quality Determinations



- Grazing Permit Renewal and LHA:

- Standard 5 Water Quality

Concerns: limited areas of high salinity

Trends: not clear

Causes: seepage from irrigation

Summary of Draft Proposed Action

- Evaluate and issue 27 grazing permits on 42 grazing allotments.
- Review
 - Allotment authorizations/allocations: AUMs, Percent Public Land, Grazing Period, Type Use, Livestock Kind and Number
 - Standard and allotment specific Terms and Conditions
 - Make modifications where needed to move towards meeting Land Health Standards

Modifications

- Adjustments in Season of Use
- More Intensive Livestock Management
- Grazing Season Utilization Changes
- Changes to Timing of Use
- Intensity of Use
- Duration of Use
- Use of other Grazing Seasons not stated on the Current Permit/Future Permits
- Reductions in AUMs when an Allotment is over Allocated and Not Meeting Land Health Standards

Additional Draft Proposed Actions

- Allotments where acres are “not meeting” Land Health Standards due to Open OHV area impacts, may have AUMs adjusted in relation to the highly impacted areas within the Open OHV areas.
- Allotments that contain portions of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park where there has been a change in permittee(s) park acres will sunset in accordance with Public Law 106-76 dated Oct. 21, 1999.
- Percent Public Land will be adjusted on allotments where acquisitions have occurred and adjustments are necessary.

Additional Draft Proposed Actions

- A couple of allotments will be evaluated for an addition in class of livestock (sheep).
- Currently, there are allotments which are over allocated as supported by past and current Land Health Assessments, long term cover data, and current utilization data. These allotments will have allocations (AUMs) adjusted to allow the allotment to move towards meeting land health standards.
- Utilization will be used as one of the tools to aid in determining if appropriate permit allocation levels are being achieved (AUMs/carrying capacity). Utilization guidelines are for a given grazing season, within individual key areas, for individual key forage species.

Design Features and Terms and Conditions

- Standard Design Features
- Bighorn Sheep Design Features includes probability of interaction: some, medium, high
- Design features for grazing within Gunnison Sage Grouse Habitat: Tier 1-3 and HAF data (habitat assessment framework)
- Terms and Conditions Common to all Allotments
- Terms and Conditions Specific to Allotments i.e. Riparian, Grouse, T&E, Recreation...

Known Potential Issues

Land Health

Special Management Areas

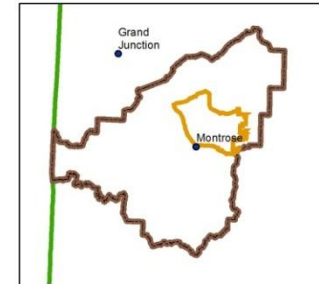
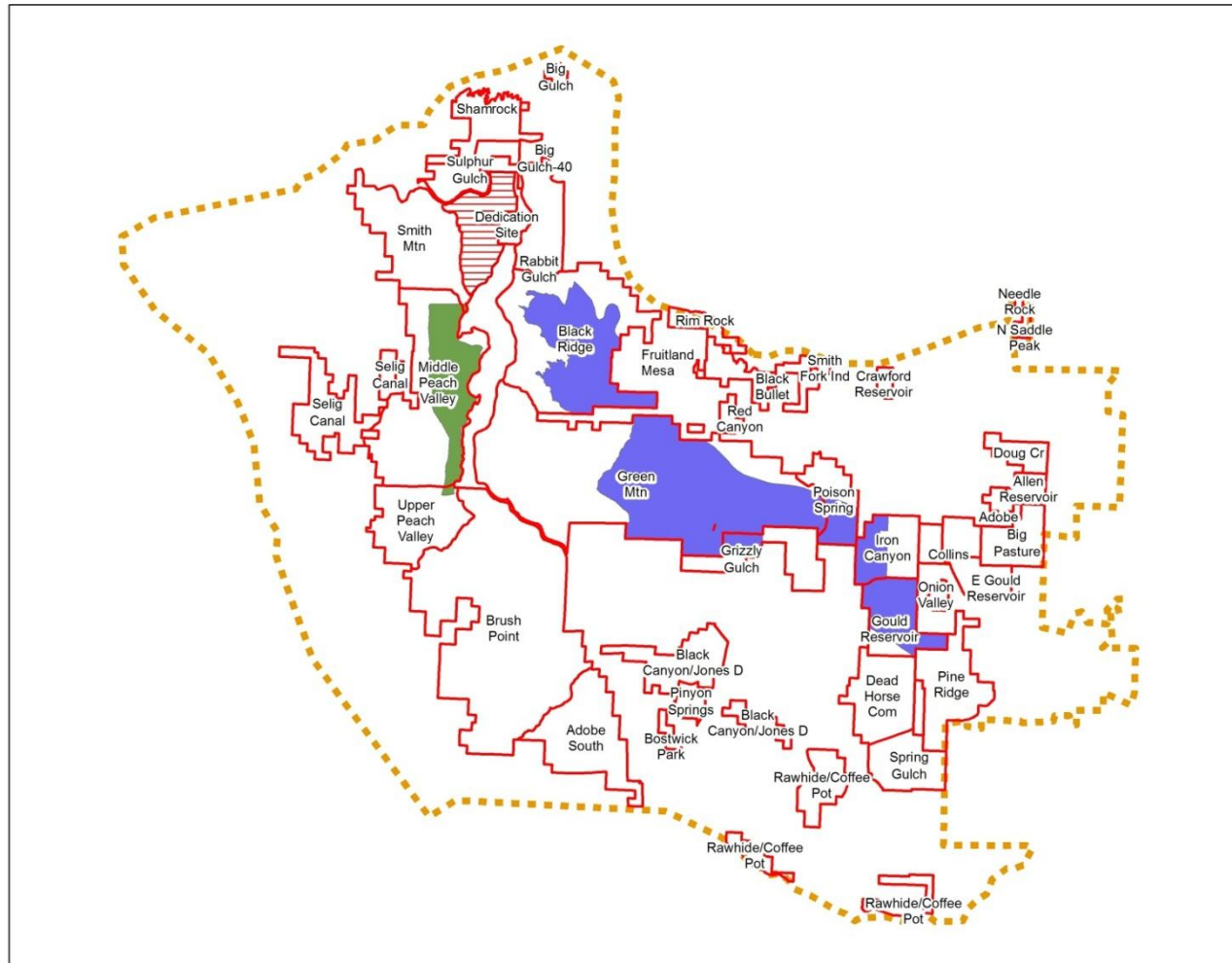
- Areas of Environmental Concern
- Special Recreation Management Areas
- Wilderness

Federally Listed Plant Species

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep

Gunnison Sage Grouse

Areas of Environmental Concern



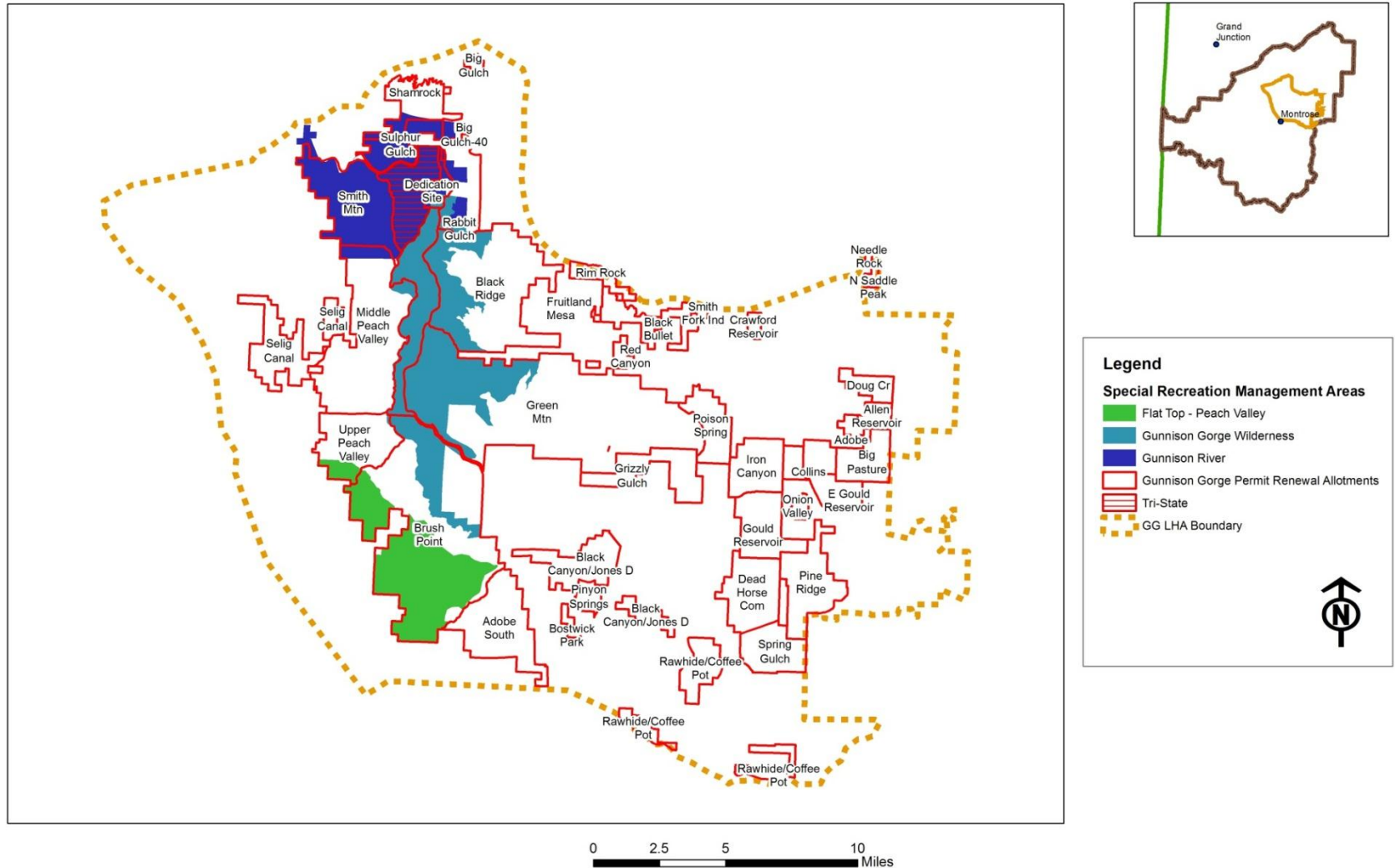
Legend

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

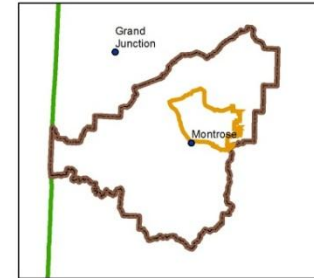
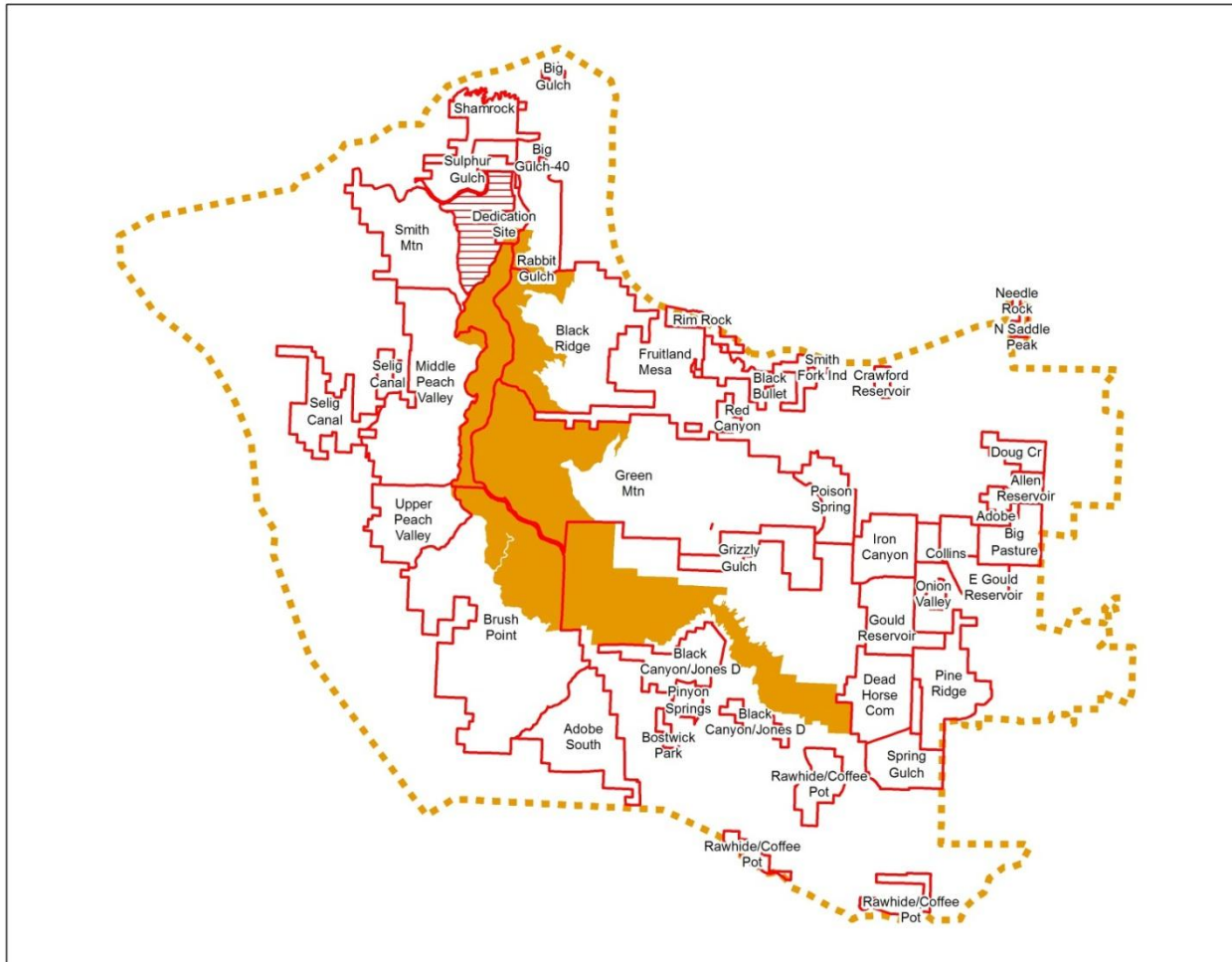
- Gunnison Sage-Grouse IBA
- Native Plant Community ONA
- Gunnison Gorge Permit Renewal Allotments
- Tri-State
- GG LHA Boundary



Special Recreation Management Areas



Wilderness

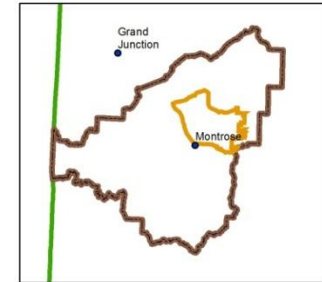
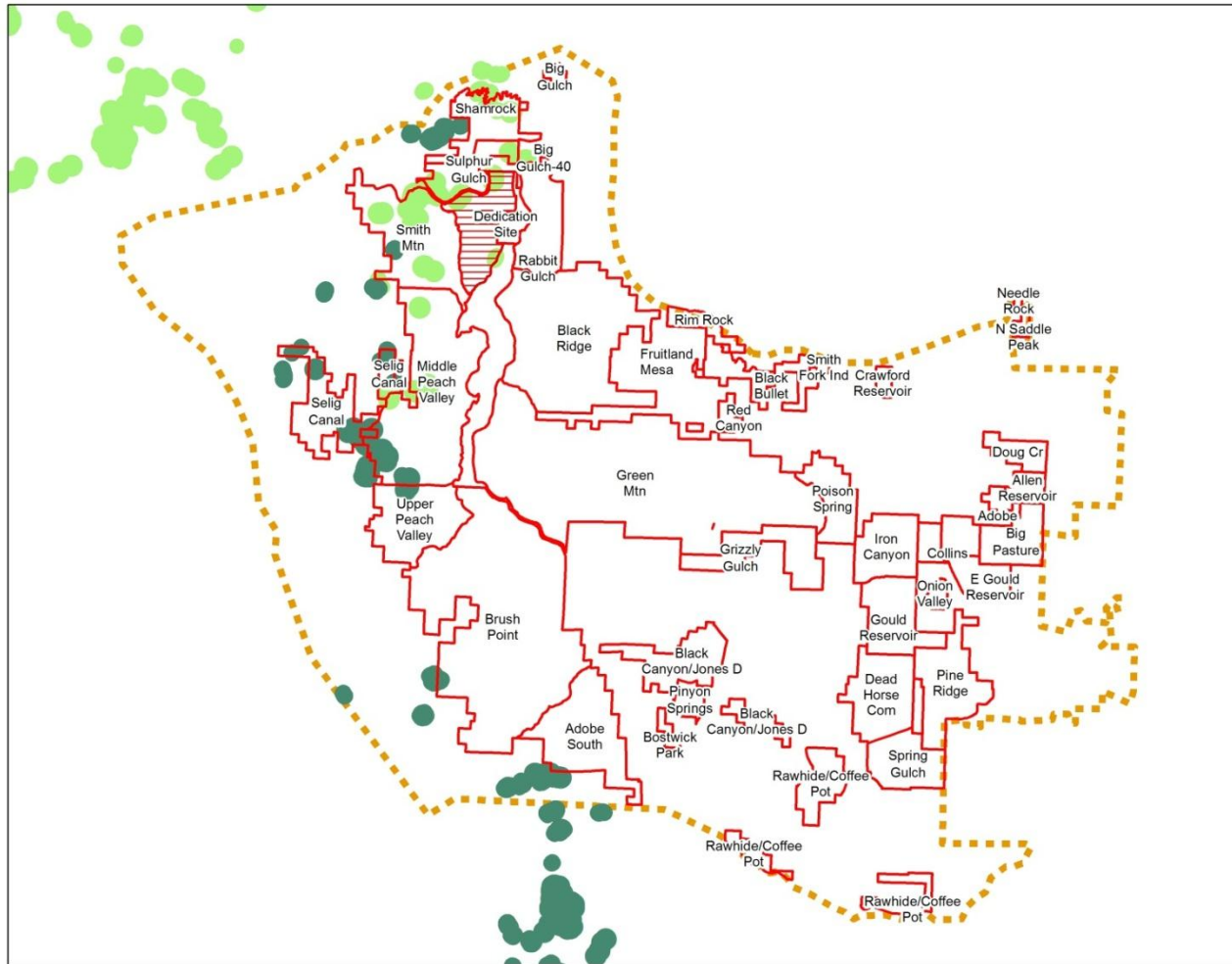


Legend

- Wilderness
- Gunnison Gorge Permit Renewal Allotments
- Tri-State
- GG LHA Boundary



Federally Listed Plant Species



Legend

Federally Listed Plants

● Eriogonum pelinophilum

● Sclerocactus glaucus

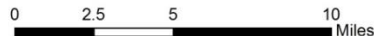
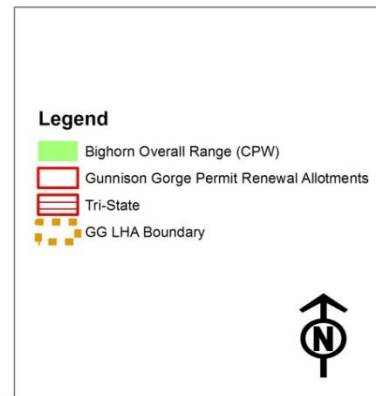
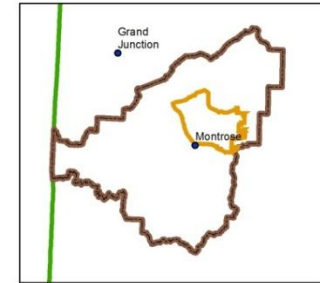
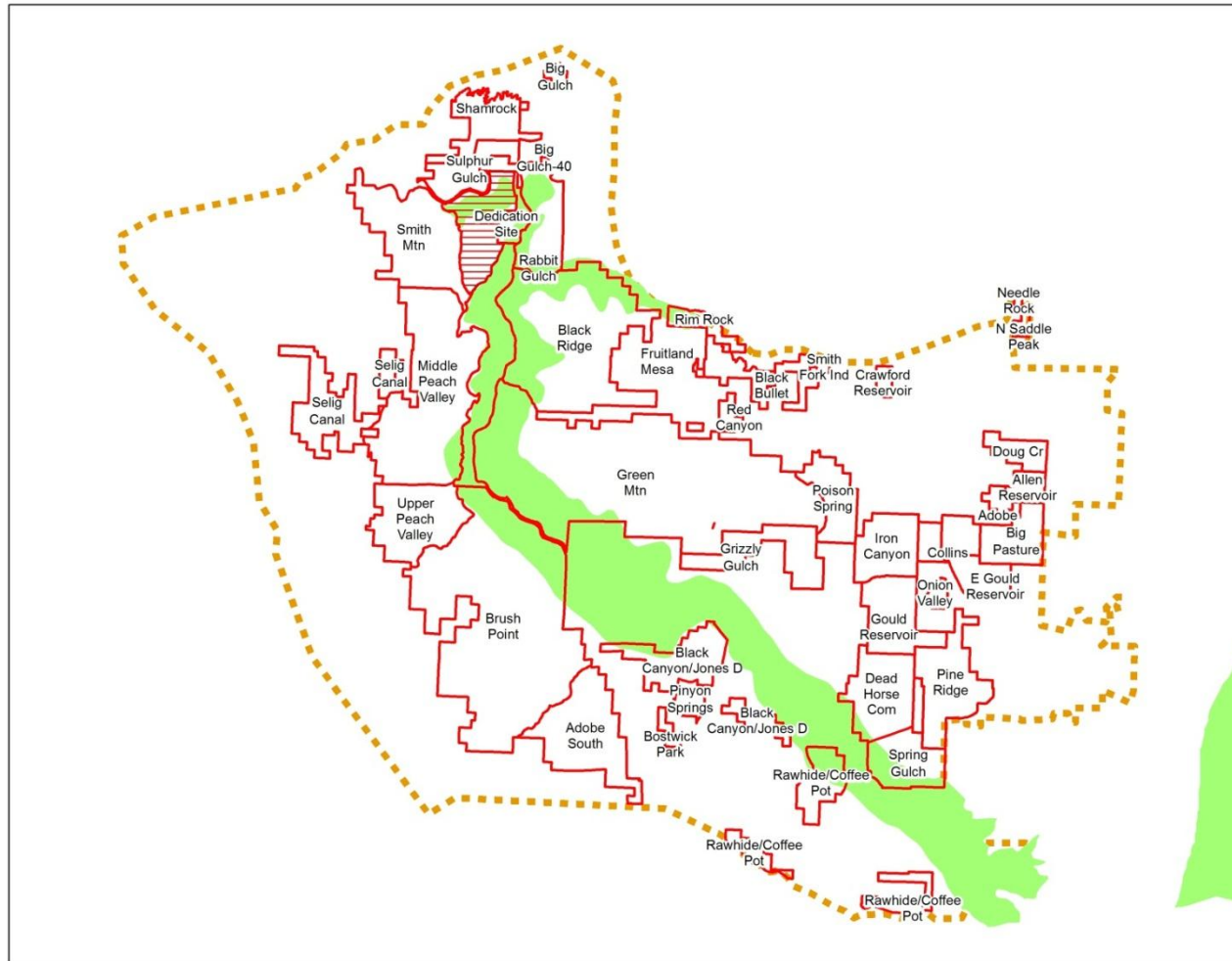
□ Gunnison Gorge Permit Renewal Allotments

□ Tri-State

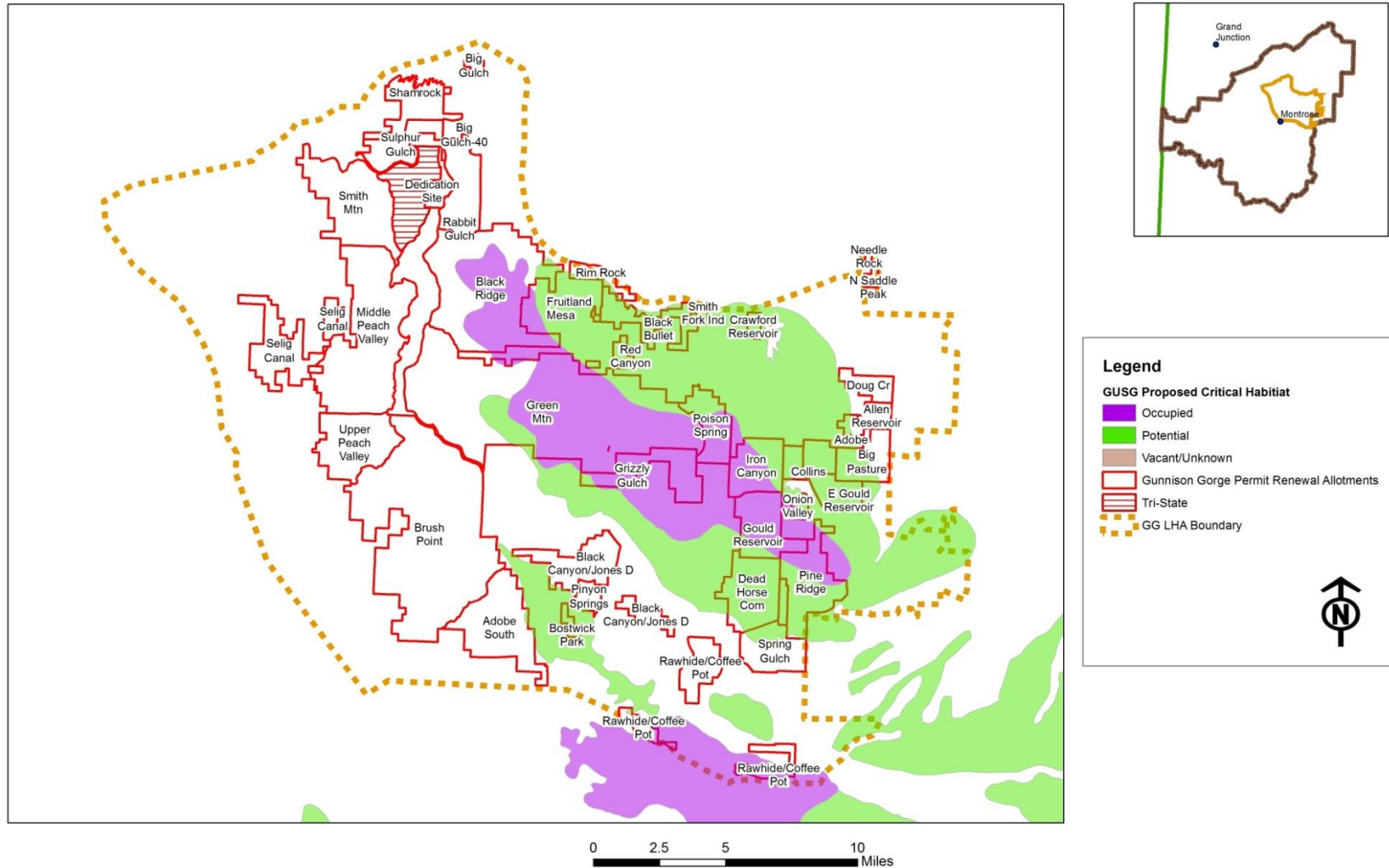
□ GG LHA Boundary



Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep



Gunnison Sage Grouse



Additional Issues?

- Please let us know if you have additional issues or concerns about the proposed action.
 - Comments submitted in writing by mail, email or fax
 - No later than August 13, 2014
- Comments must concern
 - livestock grazing permits in the GGNCA LHA area and/or
 - conclusions presented in the LHA, and
 - include supporting reasons for the Authorized Officer to consider.